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Mathias Albert / Lothar Brock

The Complexities of Global Change: Conceptualizing the Regulation of "Global Structures"

Very first draft. DO NOT CITE OR QUOTE. Comments highly appreciated.

Contact: Albert: 100105.461@compuserve.com; Brock: brock@soz.uni-frankfurt.de

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Introduction

What is a "*global structure*"? The question sounds straightforward and, particularly after prolonged multidisciplinary research efforts on the processes of "globalization", seemingly easy enough to answer. However, taking a closer look on the conceptual issues involved, the seeming certainty of first sight quickly dissolves into a number of intricacies that remain regarding the very meaning of the term(s), despite the efforts of IR as well as many other social sciences over the last years to provide ever more sophisticated accounts of a great variety of *global structures* (emphasis on the plural).

However, insisting on an explication of the theoretical ideas behind the various utilizations of the term and pinpointing to the difficulties involved in this respect does not amount to academic hair-splitting regarding the analysis of *global change*, but directly links to the issue of whether and how it is possible to regulate and steer large-scale social contexts.¹ Given that this issue is not only interesting scientifically but also highly relevant politically, it seems rather surprising that obviously a great part of the literature on "global governance", as an attempt to identify exactly such regulative possibilities, not only remains highly unspecific about its object domain, but also frequently ignores basic issues regarding the very possibility of regulating and steering complex social settings.²

Of course, as much as IR theorists (except WOMPerS and general systems theorists) and global sociologists have tended to neglect the basic conceptual issues regarding the very possibility of steering, so have those involved in the specific debates on steering by and large ignored social contexts of an inter- or transnational, let alone global scale. The only exception remain some parts of EU-related research (reflecting on the issue of governance in "multilevel systems")³ and the currently fashionable applications of Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS)-theorizing in international relations and, particularly, in defense analysis.⁴

Thus, much overdue as a combination of a conceptually rich account of theories of regulation

with diagnoses of global change may be, there are a number of obstacles which make such an exercise a seemingly difficult one. First, we are talking here about the merger of two already highly contested and difficult subject fields. Theories of regulation are sometimes very difficult to understand for the social scientist preferring interpretative methods, particularly where those theories involve a high degree of formal modeling;⁵ nevertheless, the literature applying insights from research on the characteristics of non-linear systems to the social sciences in general and IR in particular that is accessible to researchers not involved in formal modelling has been growing significantly over the past years.⁶ More problematic in contrast seems to be the way in which theoretical and national idiosyncrasies have continued to dominate the respective debates. Thus, the extremely rich German literature on the possibilities of "*politische Steuerung*" (political regulation) seems to have only been very sparsely received internationally. However, this may come as a lesser surprise if one takes into consideration that this literature itself is characterized by an internal rift of seemingly unbridgeable proportions, which has so far prevented the formulation of powerful common research programs: the rift that is referred to is that between Luhmannian-type systems theory on the one and action-oriented theories of political regulation, particularly represented by the work in the "Max Planck Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung" (Mayntz, Scharpf) on the other side.⁷ Vice versa, up to the present the international discussion on CAS in its entirety, for example, does not seem to have entered the German debate at all. Thus, the variety of (largely non-communicating) thematically and nationally defined "regulation languages", so to speak, seems to be a particular notorious feature of this body of literature. Of course, it would be wrong to assume that all the difficulties are assembled on the side of theories of regulation and that with, ideally speaking, all the theoretical difficulties resolved, one only needs to "apply" the theoretical framework to an object of "global change". What global change itself entails is a matter highly contested conceptually as well as empirically. Although the work on globalization has generated a rich variety of theoretical fine-tuning, modifications of conceptual and methodological vocabularies and data-sets, large problems remain. Conceptually, the problems mostly go back to the very fundamentals of analysis, i.e. the very definitions of "the social" or "the political" that one is prepared to use in global contexts.⁸ Empirically, the well-known problem of the "nationality/territoriality" of raw data is nowhere near of being resolved (except maybe in the world financial markets). Finally, one problem which may prove to be the a big obstacle to a meaningful engagement between theories of regulation and analyses of global change seems to be of a rather political nature. Given the political urge to control and regulate global contexts, we feel that in many analyses there is a built-in tendency to simply assume, rather than analytically establish, the possibility of steering. However, such an assumption does of course distort against theoretical accounts which basically take a rather pessimistic view on the very possibility to regulate and control. In summary, pinpointing to a lack of communication between the - admittedly within themselves rather disparate - contributions which analyze social change and the possibilities of political/social regulation identifies a more or less "unmarked space" in contemporary IR and social theorizing. Of course, filling this unmarked space or even taking stock of the issues involved in a systematic way is beyond the scope of this contribution, possibly even beyond the scope of a monographic work; presumably, it could only be achieved through a sustained effort to establish communication between the different strands of research. Thus, the most that can be offered here is a tour d'horizon of some of the issues which should be considered in such an effort. In the following, we would like to first of all take up a point made above and further illustrate some of the intricacies which are involved in the basic concepts of globality and structure. In doing so, we do not seek to superimpose our own conceptualizations and thus instantly recap what has just been unfolded in its problematic dimension. Rather, we seek to utilize the reflection on the (persisting) problematic nature of seemingly "obvious" basic concepts as a heuristic device that helps to illuminate some promising vistas as well as possible dead ends in

the proposed linkage between studies of global change and concepts of political/social regulation. The main section of the paper will then deal with two issues. First it will look at specific sets of theories on regulation with a particular interest in the question of whether the individual approaches can be applied in a global context. In the course of this reasoning we will try to establish the argument that some of the main differences between the approaches are often of a less important nature than often suggested by the representatives of the various camps, and that rather CAS- and Luhmann-style systems-theories are better in establishing under which conditions regulation is possible than providing actual accounts of successful regulation, while action-based theories ("Handlungstheorien") are better equipped to map such promising strategies, yet very often tend to ignore and/or misjudge the limits of their applicability. Another part of the main section will at first seek to sketch how various contemporary accounts of global change provide points of connectivity for an inquiry attuned to the regulation-theoretical perspectives that have been opened up in the first part. Given space, rather than attempt a full-blown illustration of the emerging possibilities, we will rather take but one example - the world-wide process of regionalisation - where analyses of global change and conceptualizations of regulation can be conjoined in a promising fashion. A few remarks on the possible insertion of the developed perspective into other areas of IR theorizing will conclude the paper.

Conceptual issues of global change: what's "global", what's "structure", and what about "action" and "system"?

It is well-known that a great variety of notions about the process of "globalization" abound. However, it is not only the processes that make up globalizations and the issues affected by it that are debatable, but rather also it's prime object domain, i.e. the "global".⁹ One obvious meaning would of course imply "spanning the entire globe" and thus point to the primarily spatial dimension of the term. However, it can be inferred from the many contributions that characterize the "spatial turn" of the social sciences that what this spatial dimension itself entails is not a natural given, but in itself highly problematic and context-sensitive.¹⁰ Thus, even a seemingly conceptually "innocent" formulation of the global in the sense of "spanning the entire globe" may come to mean many different things. Thus, it is possible to conceive of highly abstract spatial representations as "global" (i.e., for example, in the sense that the international political system is global), as well as this is possible in relation to a world-wide spread of singular instances (i.e., for example, in the sense that the availability of specific soft drink at basically every place in the world is global).¹¹ Of course, one could seek to avoid entanglement in these issues by not insisting on a fuller understanding of what "global" means, but, as seems in fact to be the case in most instances, settle for a less preconditioned definition which might seem to suffice for a specific analysis at hand; "global" in that sense would then refer to any system, structure, or set of interactions which spans national boundaries to a significant extent. In this sense, most "global" structures studied would not be "global" in either of the two senses of the term just alluded to, but rather, in both the "abstract" and "concrete" forms described, be restricted to more or less large parts of the world (the "developing world", the "OECD-world" etc., for example). Nonetheless, although such an approach could relinquish the analyst from considering the intricacies of the spatiotemporal dimensions of the problem to a large degree, it certainly erects other problems of a level-of-analysis or level-of-observation kind. In any case, it seems to be highly unsatisfactory theoretically to apply the notion of the "global" in a more or less arbitrary fashion that does not specify the particular meaning employed. While this may be acceptable in specific analytical contexts, it is certainly not in the context of a proposed inquiry into the question of whether and to what degree "global structures" can be steered or regulated. It

seems impossible to meaningfully pose such a question without a specific idea of what the "global" entails in the first place.

The basic problems and intricacies do not end here. They continue with the notion of "structure". It is of course clear that in a strict logical sense only processes are sensitive for regulation, not the "crystallized processes" of structures. This may sound like a trivial point at first, but it is to be suspected that a loose usage of the concept of "structure" can be highly consequential analytically. In addition, any use of the term warrants specification and justification after the "processual turn" in many of the social sciences has produced accounts more attuned to ongoing social change than conceptualizations which are predicated on notions of structure alone.¹² It is for these reasons that any analysis that seeks to problematize global change as well as the possibilities to steer or regulate that change needs to pay close attention on these basic issues. They are of a character that any expectation of them being resolved in an unanimous fashion would seem presumptuous. However, they need to be specified in such a context or otherwise the consequences of this basic omission may well square in the process of further analysis. Thus, in the following we would like to briefly sketch our approach on the notion of a "global structure". The definitory clarifications in this regard do not provide definitive answers, but rather proposals for a conceptually rich and empirically deployable working definition.

When we refer to "global structures", we employ "global" not in a singular sense, but in the dualistic sense referred to above. A structure is thus global only if it *either* characterizes an ordering feature of a world-wide *system* and as such is susceptible to *abstract* spatial representations only (e.g. the way in which the "anarchical structure" of the international system relies on a "billiard-ball" representation of social realities), *or* if it refers to an ordered pattern of relationships that can be disaggregated into single interactions that can be located all over the globe (e.g. the way that the "structure" of international trade is composed of single business transactions that can be located individually). That said, it should be clear that also "structure" is conceptualized in a particular fashion, in broad terms signifying meaningful *crystallizations of systemic processes or interaction patterns* at a given time. While such a definition attempts to preserve the common "broad" usage of the "global structure"-terminology to the utmost degree, it is specific enough to prevent a conceptually and thematically arbitrary use. It should be clear from the way we define a "global structure" that in terms of basic concepts of social theory we deem the (inter)action-system dimension to produce the most relevant analytical tensions. Conceived in this way, this "dimension" must not be thought of as pertaining to ontological questions in the first place. This is also to say that from such a perspective the agent-structure debate is certainly interesting from a historical and or philosophical point of view, but given the ontologically queer resolutions of ontological questions ("co-constitution") that even its most advance versions have produced, of little analytical value.¹³

What follows from this however is that we do not deem it to be a question of primary (particularly not ontological) importance whether we are talking of systems or actions as the basic reference points of analysis. Rather, we seek to adopt a stance that operatively combines both, seeking to utilize and cross-fertilize the wealth of good arguments that both systems as well as action-based theories have to offer. Thus, the strength of modern systems theory in this context is that it provides a fully developed theory of society as a theory of *world* society. It can thus be seen as a powerful tool for concept-formulation.¹⁴ Its intellectual attractiveness particularly pertains to the fact that it bases its theory of society on a highly original theory of sociality (i.e. sociality and hence society is constituted by communication and communication alone). It also pertains to the idea of functional differentiation characterizing this world society as well as its main functional (sub-)systems. While we find the idea of autopoietic systems and the associated idea of operative closure highly compelling within the context of a systems theoretical view on world society, there is, in our perception, no need to exclude action as a

meaningful analytical category even in systems theory-inspired accounts. If, as seems to be the case in the relevant discussion, the question in the end boils down to whether "action" is something entirely different from and/or primary to "communication" (or "observation"), or whether socially relevant action is "action" only insofar as it is observed by the system as such (i.e. action becoming action only when it is communicatively addressed as such), then this should not be seen as an analytical stepping stone. In this respect, the action-system controversy has something more of a conflict between fundamental *Weltanschauungen* than providing absolute analytical incompatibilities. Since that is more of a problem of analysts than of analysis, it is our understanding that it does not prevent a substantial complementary use of systems and action-oriented approaches. In general, we feel that most systems-theoretical accounts in fact in one way or another do account for action as much as action-based theories do take systemic factors into account.

It is against this background that we now first of all briefly examine the relation between systems-theoretical perspectives on the one and action-based theories on the other hand, with a particular view on their possible complementary use in the analysis of change in global structures. Our main point of departure is the context of the German "steering debate" (Steuerungsdebatte). As already indicated by the absence of CAS-approaches in this debate, it clearly does not exhaust the wealth of possible conceptualizations in this regard. Yet this debate has been characterized by an extremely dense exchange of arguments between the two sides, with ensuing conceptual refinements and some punctual rapprochements.

Between System and Action: Theories of (political) steering and global change

The theories: from basic differences towards analytical complementarities

The debate between Niklas Luhmann and Fritz Scharpf at the German Political Science Association's (DVPW) congress in 1988 is an almost paradigmatic case regarding not only the basic arguments involved, but also how, in a rather fundamental way, the two "camps" talk past each other.¹⁵ Luhmann basically restates his well-known position that because of the autopoietic closure of society's functional systems "steering" is always a highly demanding and problematic exercise. Any steering attempt is dependent on the observation of the system to be influenced and the actual result, the flow of causality, can not be anticipated by the system that intends to steer. This links up with a basic problem of synchronicity: "While one is steering, i.e. actualizes the relevant operations, billions of other things already happen at the same time which one, because of synchronicity, cannot know or influence causally".¹⁶ This argument also contains an allusion to the argument that "action" (tied to an agent) can never steer how a complex system works given the myriad of other agents and actions (for systems theory: communication about agents and actions) and operations of the system addressed, which prohibit steering. In systems theoretical jargon: single interactions can never address the "level of emergence" of functionally differentiated, operatively closed social systems. Of course Luhmann points out that steering is not "impossible" in the sense that it does not exist - in fact it happens all the time and has visible effects - , but that "steering attempts...do not change everything and often more and often less than intended"¹⁷.

An extremely important point in the argument seems to be the strict differentiation between "steering" (Steuerung) and "control" (Kontrolle)¹⁸. In a strict sense, the impossibility of "successful" steering only relates to "control" as an intentional/teleological exercise, a subject steering an object, so to speak. "Steering" in the first sense of the term however is any kind of difference reduction in social systems, which is a basic function since it allows the systems to continue operating without being "jammed" by an over-abundance of complexity. The emergence of "steering media" is central to the evolution of social systems. Since social systems are based on communication, this kind of steering pertains to communication only. In fact, the

evolution of steering media of one kind or another (distribution media like writing, print etc.; symbolically generalized communication media like money, functional differentiation etc.) indeed form a central part of Luhmann's systems theory of society.¹⁹ It is, however, of utmost importance to bear the basic difference steering as "Steuerung" and steering as "control" in mind. When talking about "Steuerung" in an unspecified sense, Luhmann always refers to processes pertaining to the internal difference reduction within social systems. *However, all contributions on political steering ("politische Steuerung") refer to what in Luhmann's sense should in fact be called "control", given that it is about intentional actions performed from within the political system in order to causally condition the operations of or actions performed within other social systems (or the political system itself). Most contributions on the debate then in fact are about "control" of operations within the economic system by the political system. And it is solely steering in the sense of "control" that Scharpf is interested in. His argument against Luhmann, that "if Luhmann was right then one should first of all wonder why it is that in functionally differentiated societies so many things do function more or less satisfactorily - and not only within the signal functional systems, but also in the relation between those and state-based politics",²⁰ thus misses the point. For Luhmann, society (in the single case!) functions because of steering by steering media, not because of the effectiveness of political "control" - so his skepticism regarding the latter cannot be disproved by Scharpf's observation that society, quite obviously, does function in one way or another. Laying this difference aside for a moment, it is now of course necessary to ask which side is "right" regarding the possibilities of steering in the "control" sense. In doing so, it should be noted that presumably neither the systems nor the action-"side" would go to the extreme and argue that steering is not possible at all or possible in all cases if only devised properly. Beyond that, however, it would seem as if the agent-centered theories have a more compelling case in an empirical sense, given not only the undoubtedly well-developed conceptual approaches, in particular the Mayntz/Scharpf "agent-centered institutionalism", but also given the wealth of empirical studies regarding successful instances of steering. However, we do, as already hinted at, not perceive an unbridgeable gap between a systems and an agent-centered theoretical account in this respect. At this point, we also do not wish to engage in alternative, e.g. neo-Parsonian accounts that stand somewhere in between systems and action theories, nor in attempts to somehow "narrow the gap" between both sides on the level of fundamental world views.²¹ We also share some reservations on the attempts by some systems theorists (particularly Willke) to provide a complex systems-theoretical steering theory that essentially seems to try to merge "steering" and "control" as differentiated by Luhmann. Rather, we feel that in the pragmatic interest of analyzing the possibilities to steer global structures, both the systems and the agent-centered approaches do already contain sufficient complementary threads which can be taken up.*

Systems theory can show the limits to political steering (i.e. in Luhmann's "control" sense) on a large scale, i.e. between functionally differentiated systems of society. A similar point is made by CAS theory, although here it is non-linearity which prohibits most steering attempts in complex settings, and not the autopoietic character of the systems as in systems theory. In a few important respects, however, systems theory (and CAS) *does* allow for political steering (in the "control" sense): and that is in relatively non-complex (linear) interaction systems, in which there can be individual and collective "addresses" of communication ("traditionally" one would say: individuals and organizations as collective actors can form part of such interaction settings). Of course, against the overwhelming complexity of society as a whole and the operative closure of most social systems, such simple interaction settings may be judged to be highly irrelevant for what are mostly seen to be the affairs which steering attempts seek to address. Yet, on the other hand, agent-centered approaches *have* shown in many cases when and where steering did in fact work in not quite so unimportant cases. Nevertheless, even theories like agent-centered institutionalism in fact *do* reflect on their inherent limitations in terms of the

complexity that can be addressed by steering attempts (in the "control" sense). In fact, Mayntz and Scharpf point out that a real delimitation of the addressed area's complexity appears as an essential precondition for an agent-centered institutionalist approach.²²

Their approach of agent-centered institutionalism in so far has succeeded in arguing for the scope and limits of political regulation as well as societal self-regulation in issue-specific areas²³. In this respect it was also particularly successful not only in tracing the conditions for successful regulation, but also in showing how political processes within networks can lead to decision- and regulation blockades.²⁴ However, according to Mayntz/Scharpf, the conditions for *applying* such an agent-centered institutionalist perspective is dependent on the characteristics of the studied area, i.e. a real delimitation of this area's complexity.²⁵ Therefore, its strength seems to lie in assessing the possibilities of regulation in respect to specific issues areas with a finite (if high) number of actors and institutions. Overall, however, this limitation of agent-centered theories of regulation to sector-specific and mostly domestic political and societal processes seems to point to an inherent limitation of these approaches to subject areas which remain below a certain level of complexity.

Reaching beyond the focus of a number of regulation theories on what are mainly domestic political and societal processes, an increasing variety of approaches has started to conceptualize and empirically assess the possibilities of "governance without government"²⁶, "global governance", or "governance in debordered spaces".²⁷ Although mostly based on an agent-centered theoretical background as well, elements of a theory of the regulation of global processes have appeared in this context, particularly where the conditions of successful processes of international and transnational rule- and norm-based systems have been shown in a systematic fashion. The research program on international institutions and regimes in particular has been able to show that probability of successful regime-establishment and thus the precondition of successful regulation is highest where the interests of actors can be modeled as a cooperative game.²⁸ In addition, a high degree of functional specificity seems to further successful regime-formation. Proof for this can *prima facie* be seen to rest in the empirical observation that the density of regional regimes is higher than that of global regimes.²⁹ This can however be interpreted in way that for these approaches too the complexity of the object studied seems to play an important role in terms of the possibilities of successful regulation. In a further step, particularly newer contributions have however been able to show that, *against* the expectations of interest-oriented institutionalism, positive regulation (i.e. regulation that not only limits the scope of possible/allowed action but requires to conduct specific activities) can also emerge on the basis of diverging interests.³⁰ This has led to further conceptualizations of the endogenous formation of interests via processes of learning and argumentation.³¹ In a number of areas, this "constructivist turn" has been able to provide explanations for the emergence of stable political regimes.³² Nonetheless, it would seem that institutional theory-turned-social constructivist still faces the limitation of a certain degree of complexity of its studied object that it is able to address.

That this limitation is not something peculiar to a variety of specific approaches, but something inherent in agent-based models, has been convincingly argued by Robert Jervis in applying complexity theories (including CAS) that have been developed mostly in the natural sciences.³³ However, like many other "applications" of complexity theories in the realm of international relations or the social sciences in general, Jervis' approach has only had limited success in rephrasing his insights and develop from it a perspective that would allow to asses the change of global structures and the possibilities of regulation in this context.

Concluding from these arguments, it would seem possible to read differing levels of complexity of social systems (interaction systems) as the main conditioning factor for the possibility of steering (and applying an agent-centered theory for that purpose).

However, it is necessary to caution against the idea that what is dealt with here are quantifiable levels of complexity or even "thresholds" of complexity above which steering is not possible.

The most important precondition for judging whether steering (in the "control" sense) is possible is less a question of establishing the "correct" theoretical account, i.e. either systems or agent-centered theory, but rather one of identifying the kind of complexity present in the field to be steered. And it seems to be exactly at this point that such a perspective on steering can be plugged into analyses of global change.

But then, it would immediately seem as if the prospect for the possibility of steering "global structures" in the sense outlined above look rather bleak. If we take "global structures" to denote the more abstract representations of social reality, which in systems-theoretical terminology would be the modes of differentiation of and between social systems, e.g. functional differentiation, territorial differentiation etc., then "steering" in the "control" sense would seem to be impossible. If a "global structure" is taken to denote more "concrete" patterns on a global scale, then the prospects for successful steering seem to improve the more the situation at hand can be modeled as a relatively simple interaction system. Thus, for example, the cultural effects of the worldwide availability of Western cultural symbols, although manifesting itself globally in a rather concrete fashion, cannot be modeled in the way suggested and is thus not susceptible to steering attempts; but a setting of 150 or so representatives of central banks with their embeddedness in various national and international economic, legal and political systems could well be - although forming an undoubtedly very demanding object of analysis; but then the conceptual developments in agent-centered theorizing pay off in this respect.

Nonetheless, given that many of the problems addressed in the context of the discussions on "global governance" are not of the latter kind, but, like the issue of world climate, for example, rather exhibit a kind of complexity that cannot be modeled as involving relatively simple interaction systems, the prospects for steering global structures may appear daunting after all. Yet it is at exactly this point that we wish to throw the ball back into court of analyses of global change. Rather than seeking to find ways to steer global structures by ever more refined theories of steering or, the way we have approached it, pragmatic "complementarizations", we would like to argue that informed by such an understanding of the possibilities and problematic of steering global structures it should be a prime task for analyses of global change to identify not only existing, but emerging (and disappearing) real delimitations of those global structure's complexities. And it is in this respect that the second meaning of "steering", the one identified in the systems-theoretical context by Luhmann as "steering" as opposed to "control", reenters the picture. An analysis which - leaning against a systems-theoretical background, but not performing a systems theoretical analysis "proper" - inquires into the evolutionary steering of world society and its various subsystems, i.e. steering meaning difference reduction and thus reduction of complexity, should in the end come up with a picture of global change which should allow to assess where steering attempts in the "control" sense may be attempted in the first place. And it is in this sense that we would like to argue that the main reduction of complexity we witness in contemporary global structures and thus the most promising steering address in the long run are not the ever-expanding and differentiating multi- and transnational actor networks - they increase complexity within and across systemic boundaries; but that rather the main real delimitation of complexity that contemporary world society witnesses lies in processes of regionalisation as a multi-systemic countertrend to increasing functional differentiation. We propose that the major trend in world society which could be read in such a way is regionalism. It is from this perspective that we propose to read the multiplicity of qualitatively different regionalising processes as in fact denoting a fundamental commonality of these seemingly divergent processes - regionalisation in this sense forms an emerging steering medium of contemporary world society, providing possible access points for political steering in the "control" sense. A regulation of global structures thus would seem to have to proceed via the address points of the new regionalities, rather than through trying to address the global functional systems directly. Regionality, in this sense, re-bundles functionality that so often

appears to be the prime challenger to states' capabilities to act. Thus, before we try to situate the present analysis within the broader field of IR theorizing, we wish to conclude this section by taking a brief look on the renewed interest in regions and seek to afford the notion of regionality some kind of common denominator against the background just outlined.

The new variety of regions

In recent decades, research on regionalism has experienced a number of ups and downs. Newer developments in Europe and the emergence of a "new regionalism" in the context of globalization have arguably led to a new "up" in this respect.³⁴ After the end of the East-West conflict, the question of decidedly *political* regionalising processes resurfaced.³⁵ Thus, Ohmae's thesis of newly emerging "region states" remained contested, but documented well that the debate on regionalism had been opened for new approaches.³⁶ A more scientifically-oriented approach in this regard was then developed by Björn Hettne under the rubric of a "new regionalism", in which a global tendency towards the emergence of *multifunctional* regions is diagnosed to present an alternative to the constitution of the international system by territorial states.³⁷ In newer contributions, Hettne connects this diagnosis to the debates on globalization and argues that the emerging structure of a "regional multilateralism" can be seen to provide a distinct countertrend of the political in response to a globalization process mainly driven economically.³⁸ The problematic aspects of this reasoning seems to be that the "regional multilateralism" remains based on state-driven, defensive globalizing strategies and thus seems to follow a logic of outward-orientation (i.e. achieving or retaining competitiveness on the world market). New inward-oriented inter- and transnational region-building processes which go beyond questions of a regionally based competitiveness of states remain beyond such a perspective's purview. This view needs to be complemented by an account of the *entire variety* of region-building processes (inward- as well as outward-oriented, state-based and trans-state, intended and non-intended) in areas that are geographically identifiable, yet vary with the specifics of individual regions.³⁹ To embed the issue of the new region-building process into an account of a steering of global structures (in the double senses of the terms) also allows to bind together much of the quite disparate literature on the various forms of regionalisation and regionalism in a promising way: it affords them a "common denominator" by identifying this variety not as a problem to be addressed in a merely definitory and typological way, but permits to thematize this variety in itself as an important feature of global structural change, i.e. *it allows to view regionalizing processes in their entire variety as real delimitations of complexity in a functionally differentiating world*.⁴⁰ Such an approach directly connects with the "spatial turn" in other social sciences which deal with the divergent appearances and structurations of social spaces.⁴¹ In this context it is important to note some newer research in political geography which has asserted that region-building processes maybe a process based on the actions of states as well as on trans-state processes of a "region building from below"⁴². The novel aspect introduced by the "spatial turn" in this regard consists in the new figuration of the relation between territoriality and regionality. Although the "region" remains a category defined territorially, the territorial demarcation loses its claim to exclusivity that was associated with its intimate connection to sovereignty;⁴³ thus the, "new regionalism" must not any longer be conceived of as standing in opposition to the state system. Regions and states *may* overlap without competing as organizing principles. Nonetheless, what is offered here is of course only a *possible* reading against the conceptual background outlined above. Contemporary research still remains a far cry from operationalizing a research program on the basis of such a far-reaching conceptual diagnosis; in its present state, it does not allow to fully assess whether the variety of regionalizing tendencies indeed constitutes a comprehensive aspect of global change that could be interpreted as the evolution of regulatory addresses that allow to counter the trend of functional differentiation: neither has there been a systematic attempt to document the qualitative variety of region-building or regionalising processes (geographically overlapping or

not); nor do most of the specific studies on particular regionalising tendencies allow to judge on the actual quality of these tendencies as possible addresses and carriers of regulatory impulses. Particularly because of the basic data problematic, the development of indicators that would allow to describe the quality of regionalising processes describes a void yet to be filled on the research agenda. Such indicators would be a first step towards assessing whether the delimitation of complexity associated with regionalisation really exceeds processes of functionally specific regime-formation.

Global change and complexity: setting the (cross-)disciplinary agenda.

Theories of international relations remain dominated by realist and neorealist approaches. Formally, a distinguishing feature of these approaches and their understanding of theorizing has been to *analytically* reduce the complexity of the world they are observing. In the end, realism is content to assume some "nature" of human beings and neorealism content to assume a specific structure of the international systems as an anarchic system of self-help in order to explain the dynamics of international relations. Under these perspectives, regulating global structures appears as a task of balancing constellations of power, defined as the capabilities of units. These power constellations are seen as either the result of an endogenous strive for power in and for itself- power defined as interest -, or a socialization of states into a system that is geared towards maximizing power capabilities. Seen from this perspective, the liberal-institutionalist critique of (neo-)realism can be seen to be primarily aimed at an undue reductionism of these approaches. In the liberal-institutionalist perspective, (neo-)realism unduly reduces the world's complexity by excluding a number of important forces that shape world politics from its analysis - regimes, international organizations, non-governmental actors. It thus also precludes policy options that seek to utilize these forces in establishing modes of regulation in world politics. Nonetheless, the liberal-institutionalist critique is widely perceived to share one of the realist core assumptions, namely the anarchical structure of the international system. Most critics that have identified this assumption as the basic stumbling bloc for theory-building in international relations have mostly adopted one and sometimes both of two basic strategies: either they have portrayed the depiction of the international system as fundamentally flawed, rather arguing that what we are dealing with is, for example, an amalgamated realm of economic and political structures and actors (international political economy, world-system), or a political system in which rules and norms play such an important role that in fact it must be seen as a society in the making; or they have adopted a more fundamental path of critique and argued that the very categories by which realists make sense of the world must be seen in a broader socio-historical context that itself is undergoing rapid and fundamental change (critical theorists; postmodernists).

Of course, there have also been many attempts to bring together many of these critical perspectives with the core (neo-)realist assumptions of the anarchic structure of the international system. Many of the newer "constructivist" contributions could be read in such a way.

We have here tried to propose another route of exploration that seeks to conceptualize global change yet does, for the time being, not come down in favor of one or the other theoretical approach. While we see anarchy to form *one* important structuring device of the international *political* system, it is not the only and may even not be the most important one. We propose to get a conceptual handle on analyzing the complexities of global change without prematurely settling for one or the other established account by reformulating not only the way we see "global change", but in which we conceive of "complexity" in this respect. Combining conceptualizations of complexity and the ensuing possibilities for intentional regulation (in Luhmann's "control" sense) with accounts of global social change (evolutionary change in the "steering" sense), it can be asked whether and how the reconfiguration of new political,

economic, and social spaces not only increases global complexity in most respects, but also carries with it an enabling potential to limit it in others at the same time. The initial empirical observation behind this approach consists in the proliferation of regionalisms and regionalisation processes in its various forms. The interesting point about these region-forming developments is less their specific contents, however, but their *quantity and diversity*, which may come to signal a new spatial structuring of the international system, a structuring in which functional and sectoral differentiation would be countered by a new spatial differentiation, one which however does not lead to a reproduction of territorial statehood on a regional level.

Most approaches on global governance and regulation incorporate the characteristics of the international system's differentiation by limiting themselves to sectorally or functionally defined issue areas. Approaches that go further and aim at the regulation of *global* structures mostly suffice to operate with but one ideal model of international organization, a world state, or a medium of regulation⁴⁴ and cannot but note the deficiencies of the modes and means of regulation available; they generally fail to address the complexity of the matter they seek to regulate. Yet, a complacency about a number of (more or less successful) sector-specific forms of regulation may well obscure that these specialized problem-solving competencies could in fact increase the costs of processes of functional differentiation in that they completely fail to address demands for integrative forms that span sectors and functional systems in social spaces beyond the state. The increased attention towards issues of culture and identity in international relations can be read as a general indicator that a research aimed primarily at functionally specific issue areas cannot properly account for these demands, their formation and their consequences.⁴⁵ It is in this context that it becomes possible to ask whether and which forms span functionally specific issue areas beyond the nation-state, without appearing as "deficient", and thereby provide possibilities of delimiting global complexity. We see the proposed conceptualization not as something "superimposed" on IR theory from an external starting point of social theory, but would like to argue that it links well with a wealth of recent theoretical developments in the discipline.

Thus, in addition to "structural changes" in the world economy, the various discussions on "globalization" have recently also highlighted the political and social "global structures".⁴⁶ The more theoretically-oriented parts of globalization research have elaborated on the consequences that these processes of change bear for the fundamental reference points of social scientific research.⁴⁷ Against this background, even the traditional empirical points of reference for data collection warrant a critical reassessment. Although quite some progress has been made in the collection of non-economic indicators of global change,⁴⁸ the relevant research has not been able to overcome the basic dilemma of empirically grounded theses on the quantity and quality of the observed changes: namely, the primary reference of the data to the territorial state as basic unit on the hand, and the decreasing importance of structures such defined in many respects on the other. Some empirically-oriented research has reflected on this dilemma and drawn the conclusion that the only development to be measured empirically is "denationalization", i.e. the decreasing structuring power of the "old" world order, but not the emerging contours of a "new" world order that emerges as a result of globalizing processes.⁴⁹ It thus remains a main desideratum for research on global change to open up conceptual approaches for identifying such newly emerging structures which transcend an order based on territorial statehood, but which can only be partly described with an optic and methodology optimized towards that order.⁵⁰

A further, promising development has been that part of recent IR research has conceptualized global change not only as change *within*, but as a change *of* the international system.⁵¹ "Beyond Westphalia" has become a marker for a number of ordering and structuring devices of an emerging global order in which the "Westphalian" system of sovereign territorial states continues to form *one* among a number of powerful global structures, but one that is supplemented as well as undermined by various non- and transstate structures.⁵² For all the

novelty and structuring power of structures "beyond Westphalia", however, it seems clear that as a result of these processes the international systems of sovereign territorial states will not be replaced by an immediate *single* functional equivalent. Quite to the contrary, an increasing complexity of various interacting and interlocked systems appears to provide a defining feature of the global system's evolution.⁵³ Proposals to conceptualize this increasing complexity as a process of "society-formation" ("Vergesellschaftung") carry the advantage of being able to combine a variety of research approaches that have been conducted with very few mutual encounters so far,⁵⁴ namely the theoretical discussion on the notions of "international" or "world" society on the one hand, and the various accounts of the scope and quality of globalizing processes on the other.⁵⁵ It must be noted, however, that most of the relevant theoretical approaches in this context operate as normatively conditioned descriptions of the global *condition* that remain a long way off translating these descriptions into a theory of social or societal *change* on global level.⁵⁶ It is exactly this point at which a substantial theoretical demands consists in conjoining analyses of international relations with approaches from sociology or the theory of society in more general terms. First efforts in this respect can be witnessed in attempts to utilize historical sociology for conceptualizing change in the international systems. However, such efforts are still primarily based on the "classic" theories of society à la Weber and Durkheim and usually omit newer theoretical developments in this respect.⁵⁷

Thus understood, taking the "regulation of global structures" as a point of entry for conjoining analyses of global change with theories about societal change also reacts to a basic shortcoming of international relations theory in general which is characterized by the almost complete absence of long-range theorizing after realism and neorealism. In this respect, the debate on globalization has opened a wealth of new vistas by putting the global system's fundamental functional principles and evolutionary paths on the agenda again. An important result in this respect has been the import of the 1980s' "spatial turn" of the humanities and social sciences into IR which allows to rephrase developments of social change as an interplay of various bordering and "debordering"-practices.⁵⁸ In opening up the question of spatial reference systems in general, this area of research allows to thematize the change in global structures as a change in the conditions for conducting politics. In addition, the attention to the spatial dimension allows to incorporate newer research results from the newly-vibrant field of political geography (change in the function of boundaries; perception and representation of political space in geopolitics etc.⁵⁹ Furthermore, research on the changing relation between market and state as a result of globalizing processes, but also on the social upheavals resulting therefrom, has shown that the global changes result in a reconfiguration of the spatial referential systems of political and economic action,⁶⁰ i.e. that economic and political spaces increasingly become incongruent.⁶¹ However, with the only possible exception of the European Union, nothing points in the direction of regional *states* forming as a result of these developments. Rather, the retreat of a congruence of spatial systems of reference that had been effected by the territorial state seems to be compensated by the emergence of transnational bargaining systems, strategic alliances, new public/private-partnerships *and*, as has however been outlined above, by regionalising processes. This also highlights that the processes of global change cannot be reduced to a number of simple equations. "Debordering" not only means the erasure of boundaries, but also the reconfiguration of bordering practices. Functionality and territoriality in this regard may form competing, but not entirely mutually exclusive structuring principles in the global system.⁶² This points to a significant demand for further research which would not only be able to assess specific processes of structural change as indicators of more general macro-tendencies, but would allow to draw a more detailed picture of the newly emerging global structures and their quality as the basis for further theory-building exercises. Engaging with theories of regulating and steering social systems in this context must not only be seen as a tool for assessing the possibilities of intentional action or politics *after* a picture of "global change"

has been completed, but also as in integral part of analyzing this change - as a kind of reflective device.

...and why bring in systems-theory to understand an already difficult subject matter?

A systems theory of world society starts with social complexity as its starting point in need of explanation.⁶³ Although constituting one of the largest research programs in modern social theory, the modern systems theory of society has so far not been used to analyze global structural change and the regulation of global structures to a significant extent.⁶⁴ To a certain degree, this may of course reflect the circumstance that modern systems theory would rather tend towards diagnosing an impossibility of regulation where the need for it serves as a *normative guideline* for many explorations in this field. Such an impossibility of regulation is most explicitly purported in its Luhmannian version.⁶⁵ The impossibility of (inter-)systemic regulation is seen as resulting from the autopoietic closure of world society's big functional subsystems. It is worth noting that Luhmann's regulatory pessimism does not only extend to *political regulation*, but even to the possibilities of non-political functional systems to influence and regulate each other (e.g. in the relation between the legal and the economic system). Less pessimistic systems-theoretical approaches seek to compensate for the immediate consequences of systemic autopoiesis by emphasizing the structural couplings between society's various functional subsystems; their regulative models however seem to rest on a number of extremely complex preconditions. They can show how regulation could and in some cases does work, but seem to have implicitly reflected the complexity of their approach by mostly limiting themselves on structures within the state, thereby accepting the "traditional" way of delimiting complexity whose demise poses the problem for regulating global structures in the first place.⁶⁶

Nonetheless, systems-theoretical approaches seem worth accounting for in considering the possibilities of regulating global structures, particularly since this approach does not have a limitation to a certain complexity of the studied area built into its theoretical design. If the systems-theoretical perspective proper is a pessimistic one, it opens a number of vistas which might be utilized in rephrasing some of the important issues in this respect. Systems theory has plausibly shown that an important reason for the operative closure of functional system and the resulting inaccessibility for external regulative impulses lies exactly in a primacy of functional vs. territorial differentiation of (world) society. While it may thus appear futile to ask for regulative possibilities on the basis of a continuing functional differentiation, one could legitimately ask whether countertrends to the process of functional differentiation can be discerned in processes of global change, countertrends which could provide an access point for global regulatory arrangements.⁶⁷

The advantage offered by systems-theoretical considerations therefore must be seen to lie in their ability to intimately combine questions on the possibility to regulate global structures to diagnoses on the dynamics that characterize the processes of global change. Of course, they thus reach beyond questions on the possibility of "political" control and extend to the possibility of intentionally regulating complex processes in (non-linear) dynamic systems in general, i.e. including the possibilities of self-regulation within (i.e. in the "steering"-steering sense), for example, the global financial system. A systems-theoretical regulatory pessimism can be viewed as inadequate if finite regulatory addresses can be identified to exist or emerge on a global level, without this requiring to illegitimately "downsize" existing complexities by assuming the existence of a high number of "invariables". From such a theoretical perspective, the issue of regulating global structures is always dependent on the characteristics of the global system and the emerging structures therein. Of course, at first glance it might seem that a number of developments could be interpreted as signaling that functional differentiation has finally also afflicted the last territorially differentiated social systems, those of politics and law. Yet, since even systems-theoretical analyses need to accept that global functional systems exhibit regional

optima,⁶⁸ one can legitimately speculate whether *common* (territorial-)regional optima could not possibly be identified that span the contexts of various functional systems above and “across” the level of nation-states. Those optima could then be read as addresses for global regulation, by serving as spatial delimitations of social complexity. Thus, the issue of the regulation of global structures turns into one of whether such regional optima indeed do emerge. What is not implied in this view is the formation of the most obvious complexity-delimiting device on a global scale, namely the institution of a hierarchical world-state. It can rather treat the relation between new forms of territorial differentiation and the territorial states themselves as an open question. The main conceptual thesis that has been elaborated may thus be reformulated in a more concise manner: a possible regulation of global structures could be evolving through the emergence of regulatory addresses that individually need not be global in geographical scope, but exhibit a degree of multifunctionality. Although these “addresses” will most likely be based on some form of territorial differentiation, they are not congruent with an agglomeration of territorial states nor necessarily does territoriality assume the same role in their internal differentiation.

Notes

¹ Given that the terms of “system” and “steering” (for the German “Steuerung”) are discussed and employed in specific ways below, we will try to avoid them for the time being (“system”) or use “regulation” as an *unspecific* term that will be avoided when “steering” is discussed in the more narrow confines of the relevant theoretical debates below; thus, “regulation” is also not meant to connote an affinity to arguments proposed by the “regulation school”, although in terms of the theoretical debate just referred to the term in that school also remains more or less *unspecific*.

² For a recent problematization of global governance theorizing issue no. 155 of the *International Social Science Journal* (1998).

³ See, for example, Markus Jachtenfuchs/Beate Kohler-Koch (eds.), *Europäische Integration*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich 1996; some of the contributions in Beate Kohler-Koch (ed.), *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998.

⁴ See, for example: Lars-Erik Cederman, *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States and Nations Emerge and Dissolve*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997; David S. Albert and Thomas J. Czerwinski (eds.) [titlxxx]. Washington, DC: National Defense University 1998.

⁵ See, for example, most of the work emerging from the intellectual “breeding ground” of contemporary complexity theory, the Santa Fe Institute [<http://www.xxx>]; also: Claudio Cioggi-Revilla, *Politics and Uncertainty. Theory, Models and Applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998.

⁶ In IR first of all referring to James N. Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics*. Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf 1990; the more “accessible” narrations which proved to be popular trendsetters in complexity literature are: Mitchell Waldrop, *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos*. London: Penguin 1994; also Steven Lewin, *Complexity. Life at the Edge of Chaos* [xxxVerlag, Jahr].

⁷ One cannot fail but note that the size of the “rift” has not exactly been narrowed by the sometimes rather unacademically-toned statements of opinion by more or less sophisticated adepts of one camp or the other; regarding the structure and tone of the debate, this has in parts resembled the early exchanges between realists and radical critical theorists in IR.

⁸ See R.B.J. Walker [xxxget titl] (in preparation).

⁹ [insert ref.]

¹⁰ [insert ref.]

¹¹ Loosely following Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1991; also. Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1994.

¹² On processual turn, see the introduction by Lapid and the conclusion by Albert and Kratochwil in: Mathias Albert/David Jacobson/Yosef Lapid, *Identities, Borders, Orders: New Directions in IR Theory*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press 2000 (forthcoming).

¹³ This is of course not to say that authors explicitly relating their analysis to the agent-structure debate produce unsatisfactory analyses, only that in their analyses they usually tend to come out on either a structural or agent-based, if not processual account at any given point, calling into question the tremendous amounts of effort put into

“reconciling” agents and structures in the first place.

¹⁴ Of course, any “proper” systems theorist would insist that systems theory can not be used as a such a “tool for concept formulation” and instead maintain that it can only be appreciated in its “pure” form; on and against this argument: Mathias Albert, “Observing world politics. Luhmann’s systems theory of society and international relations”. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (forthcoming in vol. 29 no. 2).

¹⁵ Niklas Luhmann, “Politische Steuerung: Ein Diskussionsbeitrag”. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 30 (1989), 4-9; Fritz W. Scharpf, “Politische Steuerung und Politische Institutionen”. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 30 (1989), 10-21 [for the main works of the debate: cross-reference to overview of literature or extensive referencing here??xxx].

¹⁶ Luhmann, “Politische Steuerung”, 7. All translations are our own.

¹⁷ Luhmann, “politische Steuerung”, 4.

¹⁸ The different terms are retranslated here into two different terms although Luhmann asserts that they both originate in the English “control”.

¹⁹ Niklas Luhmann, *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* (2vols.). Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997.

²⁰ Scharpf, “Politische Steuerung”, 12

²¹ See, for highly instructive overviews in this regard: Helmut Nolte, “Annäherungen zwischen Handlungstheorien und Systemtheorien. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 28 (April 1999), 93-113; Günter Ulrich, *Politische Steuerung. Staatliche Intervention aus systemtheoretischer Sicht*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich 1994; for a neo-Parsonian approach, cf. Richard Münch, *Das Projekt Europa. Zwischen Nationalstaat, regionaler Autonomi und Weltgesellschaft*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1993.

²² Renate Mayntz/Fritz W. Scharpf, “Der Ansatz des akteurszentrierten Institutionalismus”. In: Renate Mayntz/Fritz W. Scharpf (eds.), *Gesellschaftliche Selbstregulierung*. Frankfurt/M.: Campus 1995, 61.

²³ Cf., for example Renate Mayntz et al. (eds.), *Differenzierung und Verselbständigung. Zur Entwicklung gesellschaftlicher Teilsysteme*. Frankfurt/M.: Campus 1988; or: Renate Mayntz/Fritz W. Scharpf (Hg.), *Gesellschaftliche Selbstregulierung*. Frankfurt/M.: Campus 1995.

²⁴ Fritz W. Scharpf, “Die Politik-Verflechtungsfälle. Europäische Integration und deutscher Föderalismus im Vergleich”. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 26 (4/1985), 323-356.

²⁵ Renate Mayntz/Fritz W. Scharpf, “Der Ansatz des akteurszentrierten Institutionalismus”. In: Renate Mayntz/Fritz W. Scharpf (eds.), *Gesellschaftliche Selbstregulierung*. Frankfurt/M.: Campus 1995, 39.

²⁶ Ernst-Otto Czempiel/James N. Rosenau, *Governance Without Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992.

²⁷ Carl Böhret/Göttrik Wehwer, *Regieren im 21. Jahrhundert - zwischen Globalisierung und Regionalisierung*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich 1993; Michael Zürn, *Regieren jenseits des Nationalstaates. Globalisierung und Denationalisierung als Chance*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1998; Kohler-Koch (ed.), *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen*; on the thesis that “governance” is immediately expressing a functional differentiation of the global systems, see: Pierre de Senarclens, “Governance and the crisis in the international mechanisms of regulation”. *International Social Science Journal* 155 (1/1998), 91-104.

²⁸ Cf., out of the large fundus of literature: Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York. Basic Books 1984; Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Collaboration and Discord in the World Political Economy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1984; Michael Zürn, *Interessen und Institutionen in der internationalen Politik. Grundlegung und Anwendung des situationsstrukturellen Ansatzes*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1992.

²⁹ Cf. Beisheim u.a., *Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*; Michael Zürn, “Gesellschaftliche Denationalisierung und Regieren in der OECD-Welt”. In: Kohler-Koch (ed.), *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen*.

³⁰ Siehe z.B. Michael Zürn, “‘Positives Regieren’ jenseits des Nationalstaates. Zur Implementation internationaler Umweltregime”. *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 4 (1/1997), 41-63.

³¹ Alexander Wendt, “Collective identity formation and the international state” *American Political Science Review* 88 (2/1994), 384-396; Thomas Risse-Kappen, “Reden ist nicht billig. Zur Debatte um Kommunikation und Rationalität”. *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 2 (1/1995), 171-184; Jeffrey Checkel, “The constructivist turn in international relations theory”. *World Politics* 50 (1/1998), 324-348.

³² Cf., for example: Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security*. New York: Columbia University Press 1996; Thomas Risse-Kappen (ed.), *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In. Non-state Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996; Karin Fierke/Knud-Erik Jørgensen, *Reconsidering Constructivism* (in preparation).

³³ Jervis, *System Effects*.

³⁴ Siehe etwa Louise Fawcett/Andrew Hurrell, *Regionalism in World Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995; Andrew Hurrell, “Explaining the resurgence of regionalism in world politics”. *Review of International Studies* 21 (4/1995), 331-359; James H. Mittelman, “Rethinking the ‘new regionalism’ in the context of globalization”. *Global Governance* 2 (2/1996), 189-213; Andrew Gamble/Anthony Payne (eds.), *Regionalism and World Order*. London: Macmillan 1996; Mikiko Iwasaki (eds.), *Varieties of Regional Integration*. Münster: Lit 1995; Richard Balme, *Les*

Politiques du Néo-Régionalisme. Action Collective Régionale et Globalisation. Paris: Economica 1996; on the economic dimension cf., for example: Axel Borrmann et al., *Regionalisierungstendenzen im Welthandel*. Baden-Baden: Nomos 1995; Jagdish Bhagwati, *The World Trading System at Risk*. Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf 1991; Paul R. Krugman, *Geography and Trade*. Cambridge: MIT Press 1991; Michael Storper, *The Regional World. Territorial Development in a Global Economy*. New York: Guilford 1997.

³⁵Siehe Louise Fawcett/Andrew Hurrell, *Regionalism in World Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995; Andrew Hurrell, "Explaining the resurgence of regionalism in world politics". *Review of International Studies* 21 (4/1995), 331-359; James H. Mittelman, "Rethinking the 'new regionalism' in the context of globalization". *Global Governance* 2 (2/1996), 189-213; Andrew Gamble/Anthony Payne (eds.), *Regionalism and World Order*. London: Macmillan 1996; Mikiko Iwasaki (ed.), *Varieties of Regional Integration*. Münster: Lit 1995; Richard Balme, *Les Politiques du Néo-Régionalisme. Action Collective Régionale et Globalisation*. Paris: Economica 1996.

³⁶Kenichi Ohmae, "Rise of the region state". *Foreign Affairs* 72 (1993), 78-87.; *The End of the Nation State. The Rise of Regional Economies*. London: Free Press 1993.

³⁷Björn Hettne/Andras Inotai, *The New Regionalism*. Helsinki: WIDER 1994; Björn Hettne, "Neo-mercantilism: the pursuit of regionness". *Cooperation and Conflict* 28 (3/1993), 211-232; (ed.), *International Political Economy. Understanding Disorder*. London: Zed Books 1995.

³⁸[xxxNew Hettne-book; UNU].

³⁹Cf. Hans-Heinrich Blotevogel, "Auf dem Wege zu einer Theorie der Regionalität: Die Region als Forschungsobjekt der Geographie". In: Gerhard Brunn (ed.), *Region und Regionsbildung in Europa. Konzeptionen der Forschung und empirische Befunde*. Baden-Baden: Nomos 1996, 44.

⁴⁰Although the theoretical backgrounds differ markedly, there is a similarity to the basic thought of "classic" research on regionalism in IR insofar as a comparability of regions is produced there too only via their insertion in the international systems; cf. Bruce M. Russett, *International Regions and the International System: A Study in Political Ecology*. Chicago: Rand McNally 1967; Joseph Nye (ed.), *International Regionalism*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1968; Peter J. Katzenstein, "Regionalism in comparative perspective". *Cooperation and Conflict* 31 (2/1996), 124-159.

⁴¹Cf. for an overview: John Agnew, *Geopolitics. Re-Visioning World Politics*. London: Routledge 1998.

⁴²Sergei Medvedev, "Subregionalism in Northeast Asia: a post-Westphalian view". *Security Dialogue* 29 (1/1998), 89-100.

⁴³Hans-Heinrich Blotevogel, "Theorie der Regionalität", 56; cf. on this and for relating it to IR theory: Ole Wæver, "The Baltic sea region: a region after post-modernity?". In: Pertti Joenniemi (ed.), *Neo-Nationalism or Regionality? The Restructuring of Political Space around the Baltic Rim*. Stockholm: NordRefo 1997, 293-342.

⁴⁴E.g. "global public goods"; cf. Inge Kaul/Isabelle Grundberg/Marc A. Stern, *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*. New York: UNDP 1999; also: Wolfgang Reinicke, *Global Public Policy. Governing without Government?* Washington, DC: Brookings.

⁴⁵"Demands" here must not be misread as being necessarily intentional or actor-based; they could as well be read as being necessities emerging in the evolution of systems.

⁴⁶Siehe mainly Ulrich Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung?* Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997; Elmar Altvater/Birgit Mahnkopf, *Grenzen der Globalisierung*. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot 1996; cf. also Stephan Leibfried/Paul Pierson (eds.), *Standort Europa. Europäische Sozialpolitik*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997.

⁴⁷Cf. Beck, *Was ist Globalisierung*; Mathias Albert, *Fallen der (Welt-)Ordnung. Internationale Beziehungen und ihre Theorien zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich 1996.

⁴⁸Siehe Marianne Beisheim et al., *Im Zeitalter der Globalisierung? Thesen und Daten zur gesellschaftlichen und politischen Denationalisierung*. Baden-Baden: Nomos 1999.

⁴⁹Michael Zürn, "Jenseits der Staatlichkeit. Über die Folgen der ungleichzeitigen Denationalisierung". *Leviathan* 20 (4/1992), 490-513; "Was ist Denationalisierung und wieviel gibt es davon?" *Soziale Welt* 48 (4/1997), 337-360.

⁵⁰Siehe John G. Ruggie, "Territoriality and beyond. Problematizing modernity in international relations". *International Organization* 47 (1993), 139-174.

⁵¹Siehe John G. Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity. Essays on International Institutionalization*. London: Routledge 1998, 131.

⁵²James N. Rosenau, *Along the Foreign-Domestic Frontier. Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997; Yale Ferguson/Richard W. Mansbach, *Politics: Authority, Identities, and Change*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press 1996; Gene M. Lyons/Michael Mastanduno (eds.), *Beyond Westphalia? State Sovereignty and International Intervention*. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press 1995.

⁵³Robert Jervis, *System Effects. Complexity in Political and Social Life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1997; Lars-Erik Cederman, *Emergent Actor*; Rosenau, *Turbulence*.

⁵⁴World Society Research Group, "Introduction: World Society". In: Mathias Albert/Lothar Brock/Klaus Dieter Wolf (eds.), *Civilizing World Politics. Society and Community Beyond the State*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield 2000

(forthcoming).

⁵⁵Cf. Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*. London: Macmillan 1977; Barry Buzan, "From international system to international society: structural realism and regime theory meet the English school". *International Organization* 47 (2/1993), 327-352; Timothy Dunne, "International society: theoretical promises fulfilled?" *Cooperation and Conflict* 30 (2/1995), 125-154.

⁵⁶Cf. Ole Wæver, "International society: theoretical promises unfulfilled?" *Cooperation and Conflict* 27 (1/1997), 97-128.

⁵⁷Martin Shaw, *Global Society and International Relations*. Cambridge: Polity 1994; Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1994; Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism*. Oxford: Blackwell 1988; see also the discussion on "The second wave' of Weberian historical sociology". *Review of International Political Economy* 5 (2/1998), 284-361.

⁵⁸Cf. Ulrich Menzel, *Globalisierung versus Fragmentierung*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997, Jürgen Neyer, *Spiel ohne Grenzen*. Marburg: Tectum 1996; Mathias Albert/Lothar Brock/Stephan Hessler/Jürgen Neyer/Ulrich Menzel. *Die neue Weltwirtschaft. Entstofflichung und Entgrenzung*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1999 (i.E.); Cf. Lothar Brock/Mathias Albert, "Entgrenzung der Staatenwelt. Zur Analyse weltgesellschaftlicher Entwicklungstendenzen". *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 2 (2/1995), 259-285; Kohler-Koch, *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen* (PVS-Sonderheft). Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998; on the "spatial turn" in overview: John Agnew/Stuart Corbridge, *Mastering Space. Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*. London: Routledge 1995; on interplay between bordering and debordering, Mathias Albert, "On boundaries, territory and postmodernity", in: David Newman (ed.), *Boundaries, Territory and Postmodernity*. London: Frank Cass 1999, 53-68.

⁵⁹Simon Dalby/Gearoid O'Tuathail/Paul Routledge (eds.), *The Geopolitics Reader*. London: Routledge 1998; Ola Tunander/Pavel Baev/Victoria Ingrid Einagel (eds.), *Geopolitics in Post-Wall Europe. Security, Territory and Identity*. Oslo: PRIO 1997; David Newman (ed.), *Boundaries, Territory and Postmodernity*. London: Frank Cass 1999; R.J. Johnston, "Territoriality and the state". In: George Benko/Ulf Strohmayer (eds.), *Geography, History and the Social Sciences*. Dordrecht: Kluwer 1995, 213-225; David Knight, D., "Identity and territory: geographic perspectives on nationalism and regionalism". *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 72 (1982), 514-531; "People together, yet apart: rethinking territory, sovereignty and identity". In George J. Demko/William B. Wood (eds.), *Reordering the World: Geopolitical Perspectives on the Twenty First Century*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press 1994, 71-86; Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*. Chichester: John Wiley 1996; Peter J. Taylor, "The state as container: territoriality in the modern world-system". *Progress in Human Geography* 18 (2/1994), 151-162; "Beyond containers: internationality, interstateness, interterritoriality". *Progress in Human Geography* 19 (1/1995), 1-15;

⁶⁰Cf. generally: Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1984; auch: Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1991, 220-229.

⁶¹Cf. Jan Zysman, "The myth of a 'global economy': enduring national foundations and emerging regional realities". *New Political Economy* 1 (2/1996), 157-184.

⁶²Siehe Mathias Albert, "'Entgrenzung' und die Formierung neuer politischer Räume". In: Kohler-Koch, *Regieren in entgrenzten Räumen* (PVS-Sonderband). Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1998 (i.E.); in the same volume: Klaus Dieter Wolf, "Die Grenzen der Entgrenzung".

⁶³Cf. Helmut Willke, *Systemtheorie*. Stuttgart. G. Fischer, 4. Aufl. 1993, 18-27; Niklas Luhmann, *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* (2 Bde.). Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997, 134-144; *Soziologische Aufklärung*, Bd. 5. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 1990, 59-76; George Spencer Brown, *Laws of Form*. New York: Dutton 1979.

⁶⁴Cf. Albert, "Observing world politics"; also *The Politics of World Society. Identity, Law and Security* (in preparation).

⁶⁵To the point: Luhmann, *Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, 776 ff.

⁶⁶Helmut Willke, *Ironie des Staates. Grundlinien einer Staatstheorie polyzentrischer Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1992; *Supervision des Staates*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997.

⁶⁷Cf. etwa Willke, *Ironie des Staates*, 362ff.

⁶⁸Niklas Luhmann, "Der Staat des politischen Systems". In: Ulrich Beck (ed.), *Perspektiven der Weltgesellschaft*. Frankfurt/M. 1998, 374; cf. *Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, 806-812.